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FIRST LOVE

A Monologue

By

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VICTOR.....A man in his early seventies.

Brief music. Eddie Cochrane's 'Three Steps to Heaven'.

Music fades.

Lights up.

VICTOR stands, addresses audience.

VICTOR: June 1960. I was twelve years old.

Eddie Cochrane was number one in the charts.

**Every Friday night, my dad would give me three-pence
to buy a chocolate fudge bar from the Teddy Boy Shop.**

We lived in a long street of old terraced houses.

This shop was on the corner of our street.

It wasn't its real name, the Teddy Boy Shop.

But that's what we called it. We all called it that.

This was partly because it was run by a ted, named Bob.

He'd done time in Strangeways, dad said.

**And the backroom had a big juke box in it with Teds and
their girlfriends jiving away to Elvis, Gene Vincent,**

Little Richard, Jerry Lee Lewis with his Great Balls of Fire.

'A week in the army! That'll sort 'em out!'

Every so often, my dad would sound off.

My mum was altogether more sympathetic:

'They're young, that's all. They need to let off steam.'

**Well, nine times out of ten, I was in and out of the shop
in less than 30 seconds flat. I'd pay Bob my three-pence,
walk out with my fudge bar.**

Bob really was a man of few words. He would sometimes wink.

I remember him winking. But I don't remember him saying much at all.

Then I went there one Friday and Bob wasn't there.

His daughter, Anne, sold me my fudge bar instead.

'Can you jive?' She asked, as I was turning to go.

She was older than me. She was nearly fourteen.

I lied. 'Course I can. Course I can jive.'

Well, the next thing I knew, we were in the back room, both jiving away with all the old Teds to 'Come On Everybody' and 'Summertime Blues.'

I was hopeless, really. I'd never jived before, but Anne, as they say, took me under her wing. Taught me how to jive, proper.

By the time she'd finished, all the Teds and their girlfriends all started to applaud! They stood around us in a circle, clapping as we jived.

I felt great! Really felt I was on top of the world!

But just as I was enjoying all this glory, who should appear in the doorway, but dad? Face as red as a beetroot. Really angry.

'You have homework to do! Come on, get off home!'

The next thing I knew, I was being dragged out.

'Where've you been?' Cried Mum. 'You've been gone for two hours!'

'I found him bloody dancing at the Teddy Boy Shop.

Well, I'll tell you this, sonny. You won't be going there again.

There's some of those Teds have done time inside!

**Now get up to your room! Go on, now! Get up!
Get up there and do your homework!'**

For the next two weeks---no more fudge bars for me.

I was grounded. Doing maths homework in my room.

It was summer. Quite hot. The window was open.

Then one fine evening, a fudge bar flew in!

Just sailed in through my window. Landed at my feet.

I looked out, there was Anne, walking back up the street.

I shouted out, 'Thanks!' But she didn't seem to hear.

She just carried on walking back to the shop.

Well, from this point on, I couldn't stop thinking of her.

I decided I just *had* to see her again, despite my dad saying,

'Stay away from that shop. If I catch you there again, you'll feel my belt.'

Thursday night, Mum and dad went out to play Bingo.

Or Housey Housey, as they called it back then.

As soon as they'd gone, I climbed out my back window,

leaving the window slightly ajar. The thing was, my parents

wouldn't trust me with a key and I had to make sure I could climb back in.

This time around, I bought my own fudge bar.

I remember Bob giving his famous wink.

Then I peered through the back room and saw Anne jiving. Jiving away with a boy her own age. It was obvious she had eyes only for him.

A Ted saw me, then yelled, 'Here, Anne! Here's your boyfriend!

Your Knight in shining armour has arrived!' And everyone laughed.

Anne just carried on jiving. 'Come back for her when you're out of short pants!'

That was it. I went home feeling suicidal.

Well, no, maybe not, but I felt pretty low.

When I got back, I found the house had been burgled.

They'd got in through the window.

My dad went berserk when he found out they'd nicked his record collection. When he'd finished, I couldn't sit down for a week.

Nothing happened for weeks after. Miserable, I was.

Doing rotten homework. Night after night.

Then, out of the blue, a second fudge bar flew in through the open window.

A note attached to it, read:

Dear Victor,

Dad's selling the Teddy Boy Shop. We're going to Australia to start a new life. Please remember me sometimes. I'm not all bad.

I promise I'll always remember you.

Anne.

Well, what can you say? I *have* remembered her.

Often thought of her, down through the years.

At twelve, I really thought she was the only girl for me.

Even now, sometimes, I still do.

Fade.

